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## LIVING THE PERPETUAL BORDER: *Bordering practices in the lives of Russian-speaking women engaged in commercial sex in Finland*

### Abstract

As the external borders between Finland and its neighbouring countries have become more permeable for some migrants after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the EU enlargement, the internal borders have become more ubiquitous and enforced by various kinds of bordering practices. Drawing on a qualitative research on Russian-speaking women engaged in commercial sex in Finland, we have examined the everyday material consequences of policies and bordering practices. We have distinguished different sites in which everyday bordering takes place: rental markets, banking and law enforcement. Our analysis demonstrates the importance of analysing commercial sex from an everyday perspective. This perspective reveals that even women with formal citizenship can be subjected to various bordering practices due to the criminalisation of commercial sex and the stereotypes attached to Russian-speaking women. We have argued for the need to expand on the notion of "deportability" as it not only concerns non-citizens but also naturalised foreigners.

### Keywords

Russian women • borders • commercial sex • everyday bordering • Finland

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### Introduction

The figure of the female migrant brings with it a set of anxieties related to women's sexuality and reproduction. These anxieties are reflected in various bordering practices that identify and target those who are deemed sexually unfit to be included in the nation (see e.g. Anderson 2013; Luibhéid 2002). Migrant women involved in commercial sex are a particular case in this regard.

This article examines the bordering practices and policies that govern commercial sex in Finland and the everyday consequences of these practices. Our discussion draws on the experiences of Russian-speaking women engaged in commercial sex. We have argued that concomitantly as the external borders between Finland and its neighbouring countries have become more permeable for some migrants after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the EU enlargement, the internal borders have become more ubiquitous and enforced by different kinds of policies, organisations and various individual actors. The data suggest that Russian-speaking women engaged in commercial sex in Finland need to cope with everyday bordering practices that relate to ambiguous policies on commercial sex and migrancy.

The concept of bordering practices relates to the idea of de-territorialisation of borders (Balibar 1998), where the practices that

would have taken place at the physical border become diffused and the task of enforcing the border regimes falls to individual actors and governmental and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) (see also Anderson 2013). Such practices extend much further than encounters between individuals and agencies and permeate "ideology, discourses, and everyday forms of transnationalism" (Yuval-Davis 2013: 10). This makes borders potentially enactable everywhere at any time. One of the characteristics of these diffused borders, as described by Balibar (2002: 82), is that they are intended to differentiate between groups of people. As such, the bordering practices experienced by people who engage in commercial sex are different from those experienced by other groups of people who cross the border.

The majority of the existing empirical research on commercial sex in Finland has examined the phenomenon in the context of globalisation and trafficking (Penttinen 2007; Roth 2011; Viuhko 2010; Viuhko & Jokinen 2009), as well as global commercialisation of sexuality (Jyrkinen 2012). The perspective of the clients and their border crossings between Finland and the neighbouring countries (Marttila 2008) and the sexual pleasure of those who do commercial sex in the ethnically divided market (Kontula 2008) have been researched. In addition, there is an extensive and diverse literature examining the policies and regulation of commercial sex

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(see e.g. Järvinen 1993; Tani 2002) and comparison of legislation of commercial sex and trafficking in Finland and other Nordic countries (see e.g. Bucken-Knapp, Schaffer & Levin 2014; Mattson 2016; Skilbrei & Holmström 2013). Notwithstanding the research on how borders shape the experience of migrant sex workers (Vuolajärvi 2018), less has been written on the experiences of migrants who engage in commercial sex from the everyday perspective, taking into account their engagement in commercial sex and their position as *migrants* (see Diatlova 2018). This article seeks to fill this gap by analysing how migrancy – understood as a social category (Näre 2013) – commercial sex and bordering practices and policies related to the governance of commercial sex intersect and are reflected in the everyday experiences of Russian-speaking women who engage in commercial sex.

The debate surrounding commercial sex is highly polarised. Some argue that it is a form of violence against women (see e.g. Jeffreys 1997), whereas others consider it to be a form of work (see e.g. Chapkis 1997), with some studies attempting to find a more nuanced approach to commercial sex and transcend this dichotomy (see e.g. Sanders & Campbell 2007). This article does not attempt to resolve this debate but rather contributes to the existing literature on legislation and governance of commercial sex (see e.g. Scoular 2010; Tani 2002). It argues for the importance of the everyday life perspective in the analysis of commercial sex.

In what follows, we first give an overview of the Finnish legislation on commercial sex, situating it in relation to other Nordic legislative regimes. Second, we discuss the conceptual notions that have informed our analysis, followed by a description of data and methods. Third, we present our analysis focusing on the everyday bordering practices experienced by the Russian-speaking women engaged in commercial sex, followed by conclusions.

## Commercial sex and the Nordic model(s)

There is no unified “Nordic model” that informs the policy on commercial sex. Different Nordic countries have had very different approaches to the regulation of commercial sex. While Sweden has criminalised the purchase of sexual services in 1999, with Norway following suit and adding a prohibition on Norwegian citizens buying sexual services abroad, Denmark, on the other hand, has largely decriminalised commercial sex (Bucken-Knapp, Schaffer & Levin 2014). Yet, these Nordic models do not exist in isolation. They are shaped, informed and influenced by the neighbouring and global approaches to commercial sex (Skilbrei & Holmström 2013).

In Finland, the legislative boundaries, which govern commercial sex, are found in the Criminal Code, the Aliens Act and the Public Order Act. In relation to commercial sex, the Criminal Code focuses primarily on practices that are defined as “sexual intercourse or a comparable sexual act” and are “offered for remuneration” (The Criminal Code of Finland 39/1889, Chapter 20, section 9). The Criminal Code does not condemn the sale of sexual services as such, but through the criminalisation of pimping renders many activities facilitating selling sex *de facto* illegal, including organising a place or lodge for such practices (The Criminal Code of Finland 39/1889, Chapter 20, section 9).

Unlike Sweden, where purchasing sexual services is explicitly forbidden (Purchase of Sexual Services Act 1998), in Finland, it is illegal to purchase sexual services from victims of trafficking and pandering (Finnish Criminal Code, Chapter 20, section 8). Bucken-Knapp, Schaffer and Levin (2014) have argued that this difference can

be understood in the context of increased migration and prevailing discourses within the two countries. When faced with increased migration and visibility of commercial sex, Sweden responded by using the discourse of strong state feminism, while Finland instead emphasised the state’s non-intervention into the private sphere and prioritised combatting organised crime (Skilbrei & Holmström 2013).

The Finnish Public Order Act prohibits advertising of sexual services as well as buying and selling sexual services in public places, including streets, parks, bars and clubs. This legislation originated from the attempts to curb street work in Helsinki and was associated with the visibility of foreign or otherwise “other” bodies in public spaces (Tani 2002). Although legislation that prohibits selling and buying in public is not overtly directed at migrant people engaged in commercial sex, they are disproportionately affected by it (Skilbrei & Holmström 2013). Businesses that offer erotic entertainment such as erotic dance clubs, private shows or massage parlours are not illegal, but they are subject to raids by the police for the purpose of ascertaining that the workers have the correct papers and that no sex is being offered on the premises. Combined with the legislation restricting renting by non-Finnish women engaged in commercial sex, it places migrant bodies under surveillance and limits their movement both in the private spaces of the home as well as public and semi-public spaces of streets and clubs.

Non-EU citizens can be expelled from the country if they are suspected of selling sexual services (Aliens Act [2004] 2010, Section 148, 6). This state of deportability (De Genova 2002) applies to the people who are in the process of crossing the border and those who are already in the country. It does not require a lengthy legal process and can be enacted based on a suspicion of a state agent that a person may be entering the country to sell sexual services. Unlike irregular migrants whose deportability is related to material reality of documents, the deportability of the research participants in this study is related to the abstract notions of suspicion and intent. While not all the research participants are equally deportable in practice, as people who engage in commercial sex and who are perceived as migrants, they must contend with the scrutiny and surveillance that come with deportability.

The legislation on foreign nationals selling sexual services combines with trafficking legislation in complex ways. Some scholars have noted that anti-trafficking campaigns and policies have often been used to suppress migration rather than to offer protection to victims of trafficking (Chapkis 2003; Doezeema 2010; Jahnsen & Skilbrei 2017). The anti-trafficking policies as a form of migration control can be utilised by the nation-states to tighten their borders, reframing the discourse around commercial sex from a moral one to one of security (Hubbard, Matthews & Scoular 2008). In 2000, the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children (Palermo Protocol) was adopted by the United Nations. Finnish legislation on trafficking is drafted based on the Palermo protocol and is part of a wider global effort to combat trafficking.

In addition to legislation that penalises trafficking, Finland also has a government-run victims’ assistance system that provides services for victims of human trafficking. Identified victims of human trafficking can be granted a reflection period and a residence permit if their presence in the country is deemed necessary for the investigation or the trial. However, people may be reluctant to go to the assistance system as its internal workings are not very transparent and they may be worried that instead of gaining protection as victims of human trafficking, they will be expelled from the country for selling sexual services (Viuhko & Jokinen 2009).

While the Aliens Act stipulates that non-citizens can be penalised for engaging in commercial sex in Finland, the other policies make no note of citizenship, “race” or ethnicity of those who engage in commercial sex. However, taken together, they can be interpreted as an attempt to distinguish between “free” commercial sex done by citizens and “unfree” commercial sex done by non-citizens. Finnish people who engage in commercial sex may have the social and linguistic resources to place ads or rent or purchase housing; migrant who engage in commercial sex often lack the knowledge or the language skills and must rely on facilitators. Since the policies criminalise the purchase of facilitated sexual services and facilitators themselves, a moral order is established in which commercial sex done by non-citizens is considered as wrong and dangerous (Skilbrei & Holmström 2013: 108). As Jahnsen and Skilbrei (2017, 15) have argued, “domestic prostitution policy is increasingly governed by restrictive immigration regimes and border control practices”.

## Bordering practices in the context of everyday life

As critical migration scholars have argued, *de-bordering*, i.e. the increasing opening of borders in the global north and west under economic globalisation, has occurred in parallel with the increasing *re-bordering* against migrants from the global south and east (De Giorgi 2010). This re-bordering has included the criminalisation of migrants in various spheres of life also within nation-state borders (e.g. Calavita 2003).

This diffusion of borders from the exterior state borders to inside the state has led some authors, such as Balibar (1998) to speak about border regimes referring to the diffusion of borders to various occasions where the movement of people, things and information is controlled. We have argued that borders affect everyone’s lives, but especially those who are criminalised or who are excluded from the category of the “good citizens” (Anderson 2013), disciplined or others (see also Sigona 2012). Moreover, critical scholarship on border studies has argued for moving forward from thinking of the concept of the border “as a territorially fixed, static, line” towards “thinking of it in terms of a series of practices” (Parker & Vaughan-Williams 2009: 586). Similarly, we have focused on the *bordering practices* to refer to the various ways in which borders are enacted and reproduced in everyday action by various state and non-state actors. We have talked about *bordering* rather than *border* practices to emphasise the dynamic and changing nature of borders (see also Rumford 2011).

Moreover, in addition to being a political practice, bordering practices can be understood as a “multi-layered process which operates through ideology, discourse, and everyday forms of transnationalism” and, as such, they can also be understood as “cognitive structures” that permeate different aspects of everyday life (Yuval-Davis 2013: 10). When bordering practices are enacted, by state and non-state actors alike, they create identity categories to which individuals can then be relegated and, which in turn, allow for further application of border regimes to these individuals (Luibhéid 2002). In this article, we have argued that bordering is practiced in different forms, as part of political citizenship and migration regimes, and also in everyday forms, such as cognitive structures and identity formation. In what follows, we have explored these various forms of bordering practices. We have demonstrated that bordering practices are related to not only migration status but also categories of work and what is considered as proper work.

Bordering practices are often linked conceptually to the notion of “deportability” of individual migrants (De Genova 2002) and the wider “deportation turn” that has occurred in many western nation-states (Anderson, Gibney & Paoletti 2011). However, we have argued that the notion of deportability mostly used to refer to those migrants who lack documents and citizenship is too limited to grasp the complexities of bordering practices. In fact, what our research finds is that even when people have formal citizenship and cannot be physically deported, they can nevertheless be subjected to various bordering practices that exclude them from enjoying full citizenship rights due to their *migrancy* (Näre 2013).

Moreover, we examined bordering practices using Dorothy E. Smith’s (1987) *everyday life as problematic* perspective. It stresses that daily activities of individuals “are not only concerted in the immediacy of the everyday ... [but] implicated also in the organization of extended social relations or in sequences of socially coordinated action in which many individuals unknown to one another may be active” (Smith 1987: 133). Investigating the everyday life is then a means to study social relations, forms of social organisation (in sum, social structures) as they present themselves in individuals’ lives. This approach takes us to critically examine how social relations and social structures unfold in the mundane, ordinary experiences of individuals we study. Investigating the everyday lives of Russian-speaking women engaged in commercial sex offers us a perspective on how the diffused bordering practices operate in ways that create exclusion from and inclusion in the citizenship rights.

## Empirical data

The study is based on 41 semi-structured interviews conducted with Russian-speaking women engaged in commercial sex, ethnographic fieldwork conducted in Southern Finland and 18 semi-structured interviews with key actors working for the police, NGOs, policy drafting, immigration services and services for victims of trafficking. Key actors were identified based on their work in the area of commercial sex, migration or both, and after initial interviews, snowball sampling was used. Ethnographic fieldwork was conducted in two NGOs that provide services to people engaged in commercial sex, as well as in a number of venues where sexual services are offered. To gain access to interview participants who engage in commercial sex, gatekeepers from NGOs were approached, followed by snowball sampling and approaching of research participants in the places where they work. After 31 initial interviews with women engaged in commercial sex, additional 10 follow-up interviews were conducted. The interviews with key actors lasted on average an hour, while interviews with women engaged in commercial sex varied from 15 minutes to an hour and a half. The interviews with key actors were conducted in English or Russian. Two interviews with women engaged in commercial sex were conducted in English and the others in Russian.

The women engaged in commercial sex interviewed for this study were a very diverse group. The research included women who worked in clubs, via the Internet, on the streets, in erotic dance clubs and in private shows. While some offered sex as part of their work, others provided erotic shows and/or massage. The research participants themselves made a very strong distinction between work that includes intercourse and work involving erotic shows. However, they also reported similar experiences of stigmatisation and policing, and, therefore, for the purpose of this study, their interviews were analysed together.

The research participants had very diverse migration histories and statuses. There were Finnish citizens, EU citizens and non-

EU citizens. Some travelled with tourist visas, while others were citizens or permanent residents of other EU countries. In addition, their migration status varied throughout their lives. They moved from residence permits to tourist visas and from visas to citizenships. Owing to the sensitive nature of the field, it was not possible to ascertain the exact nature of every participant's legal status. Any probing into these aspects of their lives often caused the participants to become reticent. Therefore, this information was only gleaned from what participants volunteered.

The interviewees' experience with commercial sex was also very diverse. While some only engaged in commercial sex in Finland or in other countries where they did not reside permanently, others had some experience of doing commercial sex in their home countries. First, some of them were reluctant to give too many details about commercial sex and preferred to answer questions regarding their experiences in Finland, their encounters with different governmental organisations and NGOs and their opinions on the nature of commercial sex. As the research was carried out with an emphasis on *microethics* (Guillemin & Gillam 2004) in which the researcher attempts to assess every interaction in the field and acts to maximise the feelings of comfort and ease among the participants, it was deemed unethical to pressure the interviewees to divulge any information they were not happy to volunteer. Second, it was difficult to determine whether certain relationships or interactions described by the interviewees constituted commercial sex. The combination of wariness on the part of the interviewees and the ethical considerations of the interviewer precluded systematic gathering of information on age, place of origin, education, work history, family status or legal status.

The interview data were analysed using theoretically informed content analysis, which allowed the identification of repeating themes and concepts (Hannam 2002). The experience of everyday bordering practices was common among interviewees who engaged in commercial sex. However, these experiences were not always clearly articulated in the interviews. Therefore, the examples given in the analysis are the most illustrative ones.

## Sites of everyday bordering practices

The research participants for this study had different degrees of formal inclusion into the Finnish state. Some were citizens or had a residence permit, while others were from EU countries or had different kinds of visas as non-EU citizens. However, while some of them cannot be deported in practice, they all experienced the consequences of deportability (De Genova 2002). As people with migrant backgrounds and as people who engaged in commercial sex, they inhabited spaces of heightened surveillance and scrutiny, where in an encounter with the authorities they were deportable until proven otherwise.

Here, we discuss the forms of everyday bordering that the interviewees encountered from non-state actors in the field of housing and banking, as well as state actors such as the police, and how the research participants cope with these different forms of everyday bordering.

### Non-state actors

Border regimes extend beyond government actors to ordinary citizens who are encouraged and sometimes required through legislation to participate in policing and enforcing these regimes

(Anderson, Gibney & Paoletti 2011). One particular area in which ordinary citizens are engaged in policing is the rental market. Here, the authorities and individuals or organisations collaborate to enforce a border regime towards those who are deemed to be selling sex. In Finland, as in Norway and Sweden, current legislation prohibits renting out spaces for the purpose of selling sex. The discourse around this policy is usually framed in terms of protecting those who sell sex from exploitation (for a discussion in the Norwegian context see Skilbrei 2012). Consequently, finding affordable and convenient housing is a challenge, and the research participants were subjected to treatment that would seem to go against the spirit of the law. As one research participant described her experience:

In [a Nordic country], I was kicked out of a hotel. There was a whole [legal] case saying that they have uncovered something, and that I'm a victim. In their opinion. The entire hotel staff gathered there and I was kicked out onto the street in front of everybody. And I ended up out on the street, at night. They didn't give me my money back. (Interview 9)

By framing her as a victim, a framing that she herself rejected, the authorities removed her from the hotel. Her own self-identification had no bearing on the situation, as the victim identity was constructed by the authorities' actions upon her body. Her removal from the hotel was also public. It functioned to reinforce the category of the morally "good" citizen by excluding her from it (cf. Anderson 2013). Even though the legislation is supposedly meant to protect people selling sex from those who would benefit from them financially or harm them, in effect, the hotel kept her money and at the same time, she was put in physical danger, being ousted onto the street at night.

As the legislation punishes landlords and agencies who rent to people engaged in commercial sex, it encourages them to be proactive and filter out any potential tenants who may be selling sex. In the same interview, the research participant described how she was turned down when attempting to rent a flat in Finland:

In Finland, it happened three times that I tried to get a flat and was told, we're not going to give you the flat because you're a prostitute. (Interview 9)

In her experience of being evicted from a hotel, it was the authorities, namely the police, who labelled her a victim and effectively denied her access to housing. In this case, it was the landlords who had the power to impose a label on her and through imposing this label denied her housing. While the law specifically restricts renting for the purposes of selling sexual services, in its application, a person who is assumed to be a "prostitute" can be effectively excluded from accessing housing, whether she had planned to use the space to sell sex or only to reside there during her time in Finland.

The legislation encourages property owners to make assumptions about people based on their gender and country of origin and legitimises discrimination on this basis. At the same time, there is information sharing between law enforcement and property owners as described in an interview of a police:

If girls rent apartments from companies, [the companies] start to call us if girls are coming in. [If] they think [based on certain characteristics she] could be a sex worker. They call us and ask, "Now we have girls from this country, 2-3 girls ...". (Police interview)



The property owners are made into implementers of bordering practices. First, they profile prospective tenants and decide whether they could be selling sex based on their country of origin, gender and the number of people coming. Second, they share information with the police to confirm their suspicions.

While many of the research participants reported having no problem finding housing using private landlords and companies, most had to rely on acquaintances, clients and other facilitators at one time or another. Some found this arrangement beneficial, since renting with peers made them feel safer and, through this, they found meaningful relationships. Others, however, felt excluded from these personal networks.

I used to ask the other girls. And out of ten inquiries only one said, "Oh, I can recommend something to you." All of the others didn't want to help, didn't want to say where and how I could find a flat. (Interview 29)

This account illustrates that when access to formal housing is limited, informal and personal networks need to be utilised. Those who lack these networks or are excluded from them may face difficulty in finding a place to live.

Bordering practices find their way into other daily interactions. The research participants were generally reluctant to talk about money, but it was clear that transactions tend to be carried out in cash. However, payments for utilities and housing often required bank transactions, and many of the research participants had to rely on the Finnish banking system to make these payments. Difficulties in opening bank accounts are not unique to migrants who engage in commercial sex (see e.g. Könönen 2018), but inability to open bank accounts due to a lack of a residence permit produces specific problems for those who engage in commercial sex as keeping large sums of money in cash may expose them to additional threats of violence and theft (Gülçür & İlkaracan 2002). When research participants were successful in opening bank accounts, they had to come into contact with the banking system whenever they made a deposit of their cash earnings. These transactions brought them under scrutiny of the banking system:

I'm taking money to put on my account – 360 Euros, just to pay for the electricity, for the flat. [...] But [the banks] are constantly asking for explanatory notes. A Finn is standing at the cashier's desk ... I tested it out with my Finnish friends on purpose. They don't ask them. Then, they stopped my account and set up a meeting. It's not even in their jurisdiction. There's the tax office for that. We had discussed this with clients, and they didn't believe me. This is the first time I encounter something like this. They demand an explanatory statement – what is this account? They don't ask the Finns. They asked me, specifically: do you have accounts in other countries? What about real estate? Do you have friends or family members who are oligarchs? [...] This is an intrusion into my private life. I don't ask them who are their weekend drinking buddies. (Interview 25)

According to her experience, she encountered scrutiny from the bank because she was a migrant, while noting that Finns were not subjected to the same scrutiny. Finnish Financial Supervisory Authority's directive (Financial Supervisory Authority 2017) instructs the banks to "know customers' business" in order to counter money laundering and terrorism. While it is difficult to substantiate how different the experience of migrants and Finns would be at the

bank, for a migrant woman engaged in commercial sex, this scrutiny creates particular set of problems. As her income is in cash, she may have to have these encounters frequently, which means that she has to repeatedly dodge intrusive questions from the bank or face stigma or other repercussions if the bank finds out that she engages in commercial sex. Even though the bank does not have access to the same coercive power as the state, they can still force the interviewee into this encounter by suspending her account.

The research participants actively resisted this bordering practice. She stated in a conversation during field work: "And they always ask me to write some explanation about the money. Where it comes from. So I just started writing things like 'I found it on the street', 'It fell from the sky'". (Field notes). The blatantly fantastical explanations in these notes are acts of resistance, however small, that allowed her to avoid saying that she engages in commercial sex and expose the arbitrariness of the requirement to write an explanatory note.

The power relationship between the bank and the research participant was asymmetrical. While the bank could ask her certain personal questions about her relationships, she could not ask them similar questions. In this case, revelations about her personal life may lead to stigmatisation or unforeseen legal consequences. While providing a service, the bank is also involved in additional surveillance and policing of certain foreigners. The role of the banking system in the bordering process can push migrants further into the shadow economy and thus add to their exclusion from the citizen category.

### State actors

Finnish legislation is written in a way that clearly separates its different elements into trafficking, pandering, violence and public order sections, but when it is enacted, these elements become difficult to disentangle. As the police play their part in information sharing that in practice come to exclude people who engage in commercial sex from accessing housing, they also participate in bordering practices in other ways. The task of checking the validity of immigration documents is not clearly separated from their task of preventing violence against sex workers, trafficking and pandering and maintaining public order. Consequently, the relationship between the police and the women interviewed for this study is ambiguous. One woman who had worked on the street described the contradiction as follows: "There was a time [the police] hassled us, but they also helped us". (Interview 26) The goal of the police is to prevent crimes such as trafficking, pimping and violence against those who sell sex. This requires them to build a relationship of trust with people who sell sex. However, the police are also expected to check migration status and keep commercial sex off the streets. As a police interviewee put it:

Every time that I meet [people who sell sex], I say that it's time to remember it's illegal to work [on the streets] (*laughs*). But it's not like we're running [after them] because we are more interested in finding who uses these girls, takes money from them, or uses violence against them. (Police interview)

Consequently, the police have to find a way to simultaneously "hassle" and protect those who engage in commercial sex. The interviewee tackles these two tasks by acting upon the people who sell sexual services, but still maintaining that the prerogative is to find those who commit acts of violence or fraud against them. The laws and, consequently, the law enforcers treat those who sell sex

as both victims, or as potential victims, of a crime such as pimping and potential perpetrators of other crimes or infractions such as public disorder. As such, people who engage in commercial sex can be constructed as in need of additional surveillance for their own protection. The surveillance creates a perpetual practice of everyday bordering where migration documents could be checked every time a person is in a space where commercial sex could be sold. Even though not all research participants are equally deportable, they operate in a field of heightened surveillance and must cope with an assumption of their deportability. They must either face the scrutiny and, in their encounter with the police, produce proof that they are not deportable or endeavour to avoid any contact with the police that would expose them to this scrutiny as it could have long-lasting consequences.

These consequences are different. As the interviews with the police suggest, the approach to commercial sex in Finland is not uniform and just because a person does not have a residence permit in Finland does not necessarily mean that an encounter with the police would result in an immediate deportation. Those who have citizenship or residence status also face unpredictable consequences of the encounter. For example, they cannot be sure that information would not be passed on to rental companies or employers.

First of all, the police. I don't want them to have this information that at one time I was out there somewhere. [...] If you, for example, get a job later on, they write it all down. It's a mark on you. [...] How many visas have been canceled for our girls who were traveling. They find condoms in the bags on the border and close the visa for a year. [...] [A police officer] comes to you immediately. Again, it's his decision – who's going to be allowed to work, and who isn't. [...] The police are not answerable to us, or to anyone. The same as the border guards. (Interview 27)

The border regimes and practices manifest in the heightened surveillance of those who engage in commercial sex. The above-cited research participant did not personally fear deportation, but she expressed concern that her personal information could be recorded and used against her in the future. The removal from the country cannot be seen as the only form of bordering. Even if removal is not enacted, there is no clarity whether the information that is being gathered during the checks could be used to deny visas, housing or employment in the future. Thus, the border extends over time and space to possible future occasions of bordering. Consequently, it can also affect those with valid visas, residence permits or citizenships.

As the police have a degree of discretionary power, this adds to the research participant's feelings of powerlessness. To the interviewee, the decisions by the police regarding who is allowed to work and who is not seem arbitrary. The inability to demand transparency or accountability from the police highlights the exclusion from the citizen category.

To cope with the ambiguities imposed by the legislation and law enforcement, the participants adapted a contradictory attitude to the police. In general, the police as an institution was seen in a positive light. The research participants tended to have a high level of trust in the police. They reported that a threat of calling the police is often an effective method of dealing with troublesome clients. However, when asked about any occasion to deal with the police themselves, there was often a strong expression of relief that they had never had an encounter. There were also stories of negative experiences circulating among the interviewees. These stories referred to street workers being harassed by the police for having condoms or followed

by police cars. These stories, as they circulated among the people who engaged in commercial sex, created a complex relationship to the police, where they were both trusted and mistrusted at once, resulting in a general attitude that contacts with the police should be avoided.

## Consequences of everyday bordering

The encounters with state and non-state actors who enacted bordering practices created a state of being for the research participants where they were exposed to perpetual bordering practices. It was not confined to the moment of interaction with the actors but extended into day-to-day reality. Lyon (2005) argued that the use of electronic identity cards effectively transplants the border into every person's pocket, so that people begin to carry the border with them. However, while identity cards may extend the border into the territory, migrant bodies can carry the border without the physical identity card. As Chang noted, it is foreign-appearing bodies in the context of the US border regimes that "carry a figurative border with us" (1997: 249). According to him, border regimes seep through the physical border and then further into the minds of those who may be deemed potential outsiders by these border regimes, creating a state of perpetual anxiety.

The disciplining nature of bordering does not require an encounter with state or non-state actors to take place. The possibility of such an encounter is enough to affect behaviour. The research participant who managed to find rental flats talked about how they need to avoid being noticed and identified by landlords or neighbours. Their experience of inhabiting the flats is shaped by their awareness of the border.

You just have to be very careful. Don't run around wearing high heels. Don't bother the neighbours. So that you wouldn't be caught out. When a client comes, you tell him, "please be very, very quiet". (Interview 10)

The research participant had to inhabit the flat in a particular way. Her work practices, dress and movements had to be modified. She constantly worried that she would be identified as someone who engages in commercial sex. This fear informed her actions and her movement through space. Even when the police were not physically present, they loomed large over her work life. Her worries were not confined to immediate interactions but extended into the future. Everyday bordering practices were part of her cognitive structures, as argued by Yuval-Davis (2013). Even when there was no individual or institution directly imposing everyday bordering practices on her, she internalised these practices and was bound by them.

The border is diffused. It shapes everyday life of the research participants. These perpetual bordering practices foster an environment of anxiety and uncertainty. Consequently, there is no way of predicting on which side of the exclusion/inclusion divide a person would be placed. As one interviewee said:

Because I've heard plenty about how you could end up with problems later on. So I'm afraid, so every time I'm cautious. I don't work on the streets. Even when after seeing a client, I'm running towards my house, and I have to pass the street where there's work, god forbid, so nobody would catch me there. I even take detours. [...] So I don't want to have any dealings with the police. Because you can't prove to them that I'm a normal

person, with two university degrees. [...] They don't care what's my IQ and all that. They see what I do. [...] In fact, it's really humiliating to be afraid of the police all the time. To be afraid that instead of money you'll be put into handcuffs and get deported. It's very unpleasant. Because I think that I'm not doing anything wrong. (Interview 14)

The research participant expressed her frustration that her intelligence, education and identity were being disregarded by the police's conflation of what she did with who she was. While her own assessment of her actions was that she was not doing anything wrong, the police evaluated her engagement in commercial sex as a crime. In order to continue working successfully, she needed to accept the subjectivity that was attributed to her. As Luibhéid (2002: xxii) pointed out, migrant identities, including sexual identities, are produced and naturalised by immigration controls. The interviewee, therefore, incorporated bordering into her daily life. Even if her own opinion of her own identity and her actions was different, the border regimes seeped into everyday practices.

## Conclusion

Our article has focused on the everyday practices through which border regimes are produced and reproduced in the lives of Russian-speaking women engaged in commercial sex. We have argued that policies directed at commercial sex play an ambiguous part in structuring the lives of the interviewed women. While many policies are designed to protect the women, they often end up facilitating exploitation or enforcing exclusion from citizenship rights for the sex workers. Whatever the stated purposes of the policies may be, they extend the state borders into the everyday areas of the sex workers' lives such as housing, work and banking. When these policies are enacted, the categories of migrant sex worker and victim of trafficking

are constructed. These policies can be used to survey and act upon those who are deemed to belong to these categories. In effect, if the permeable national border cannot stop people from entering the country, they could still be restricted within the country's borders through the cooperation between legislation, law enforcement and non-governmental actors.

In line with literature that has emphasised that border regimes are created and enforced not only by the state but also by various non-state actors and individuals (Rumford 2011), we have also analysed different sites in which everyday bordering takes place. One such site is the rental market, where housing companies, hotels and private individuals are expected to play the role of border guards. Another is banking, where clients' cash flows are scrutinised. In addition, state actors such as the police play a part in bordering practices through application of contradictory policies or arbitrary exclusions.

Finally, our study reveals that deportability affects not only those who lack residence permits but also foreigners who are not deemed as good citizens (Anderson 2013). To this effect, state and non-state actors at the behest of the government may take on extensive policing of foreign bodies. In the case of women engaged in commercial sex, individuals who have citizenship can also be subsumed by the surveillance and treated as deportable. The case of Russian-speaking women engaged in commercial sex demonstrates that bordering practices and deportability can affect those who are subjected to bordering practices due to the work they engage in and due to their migrancy. Thus, we need to expand the concept of deportability to include groups that are excluded from the category of the good citizen (Anderson 2013) also on other grounds than legal status. While previous research had shown how migrant workers are marginalised because of their precarious legal status (e.g. Könönen 2015), our research demonstrates that legislation that targets people engaged in commercial sex opens avenues for surveillance of certain groups of migrants, creating exclusion regardless of the legal status.

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